

adabana

徒 花

①

A flower that does not bear
fruit even if it blooms.
In other words, something
that exists without substance.



NON

adabana

徒 花

VOLUME 1

STORY AND ART

NON



DARK HORSE MANGA

TRANSLATION
Caleb Cook
LETTERING AND RETOUCH
Brendon Hull





adabana

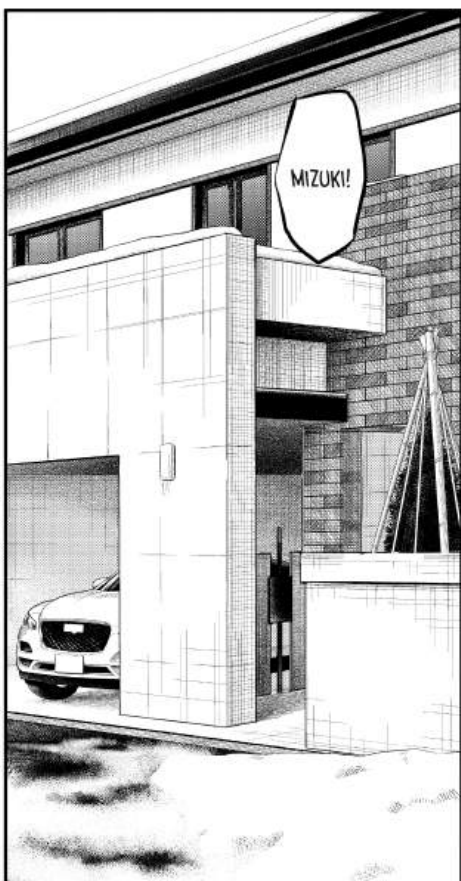
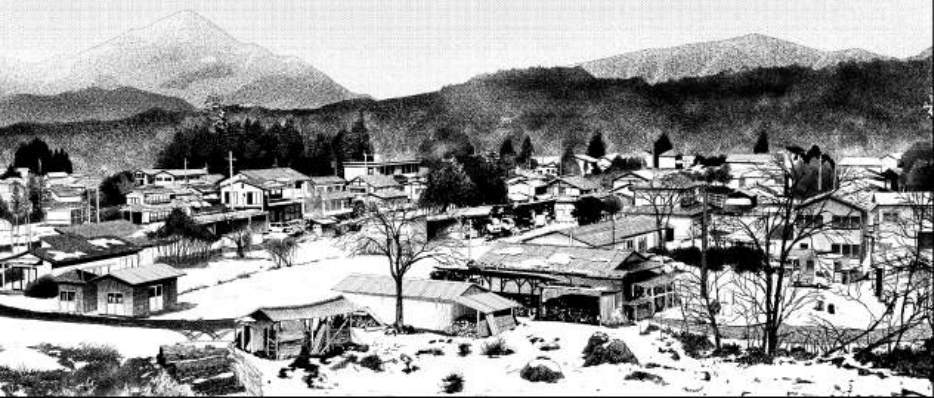
徒

花



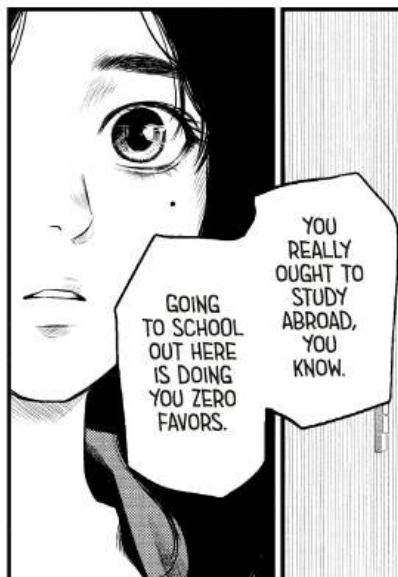
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MISS
IGARASHI'S
CURRENT
WHEREABOUTS
ARE UNKNOWN,
AND THE
AUTHORITIES
SUSPECT...

...THAT
THE YOUNG
WOMAN
MAY HAVE
COME TO
GRIEVOUS
HARM...



THE SEVERED
HAND BELONGS
TO EIGHTEEN-
YEAR-OLD
MAKO IGARASHI,
A STUDENT AT
MORINAKA
SOUTH, A
PUBLIC HIGH
SCHOOL.



DO YOU
KNOW HER,
MIZUKI?!

WHAT?!
ONE OF YOUR
SCHOOLMATES
AT MORINAKA
SOUTH!



MURDER
JUST DOESN'T
HAPPEN HERE,
OUT IN THE
COUNTRY-
SIDE...

HER
HAND WAS
CUT OFF?!
HOW
TERRIBLE...

...



ALL THE
MORE REASON
NOT TO
ASSOCIATE
WITH ANY
UNSAVORY
TYPES,
SUZUKI.

MOM.



GET
YOUR ACT
TOGETHER.

NO DECENT
COLLEGE WILL
HAVE YOU IF
YOU DON'T
GET THOSE
GRADES UP.



YOU
WANT...

...SOME
APPLE?





Sign: Police Station



ARE YOU
HERE TO
PROVIDE
INFORMATION?

AH!
DO YOU
GO TO
THE SAME
SCHOOL?

YES...
WELL...NOT
EXACTLY.

YES...

ERM...

?

A-ABOUT
MAKO
IGARASHI...

HMM?

IT'S
ME.

I DID
IT.













ACK!

YOU'RE
LIKE THE
WORLD CHAMP
OF SPACING
OUT, GIRL.

PAT
PAT

HEH!
MORNING!

Good
morning
yourself...

YOU CAN'T
EXPECT ME TO
DODGE THAT
OUT OF THE
BLUE...

YOU GOT
CRAM SCHOOL
TODAY, YEAH?
STOP BY THE
RESTAURANT
ON YOUR WAY
HOME!





Banner: Ramen



"Mako was
peppy and
full of life."

"The
type of girl
everyone
loved to be
around."



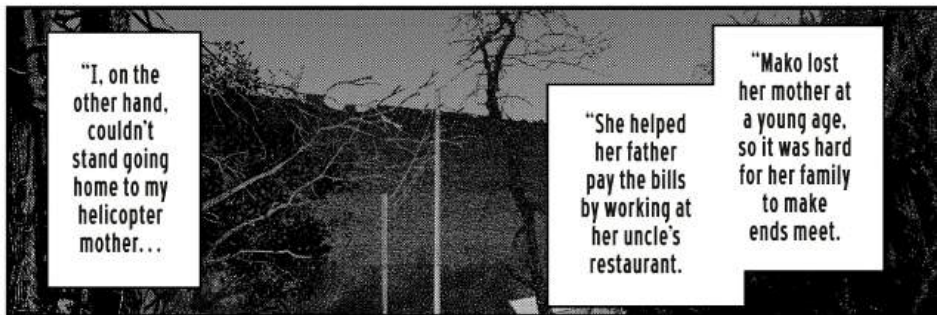
HELLO,
SIR.

HEY,
MAKO!
MIZUKI'S
HERE!

GET ON
IN HERE,
OUTTA THE
COLD!

IF
IT AIN'T
MIZUKI!

'KAAAY!
BE RIGHT
THERE!





HOW
ABOUT A
LITTLE
POST-
GRADUATION
TRIP?



CHECK
IT OUT!



TOKYO'S
NOT
EXACTLY
CLOSE,
THOUGH...

WE CAN
WEAR OUR
UNIFORMS
AND MAKE IT
OUR FINAL
HURRAH AS
HIGH SCHOOL
GIRLIES!

THAT
SETTLES
IT!!

YOU MEAN
YOU'VE
NEVER
BEEN?!

OH?
THAT MAGIC
KINGDOM
PLACE...?



CITY OR
KINGDOM?
HOW BIG
IS IT?

YUH-HUH!
BASICALLY A
KINGDOM!

A CITY,
HUH?

IT
WAS WILD!
A WHOLE
GLIMMERING
CITY...

I WENT ONCE,
WHEN MY MOM
WAS STILL
AROUND!



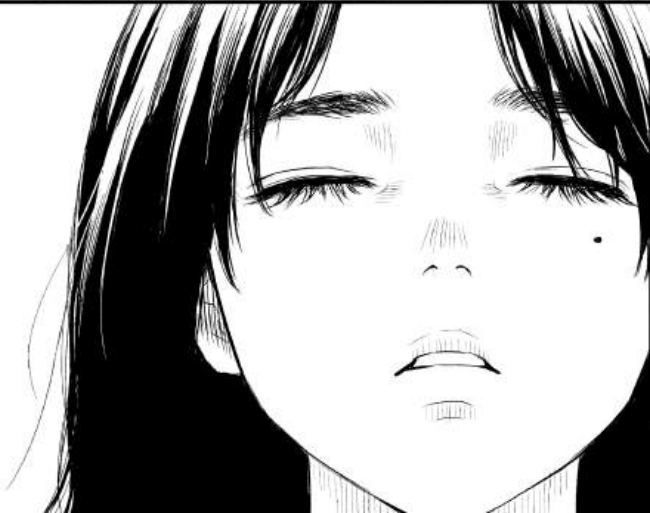


"Being
with her
put me at
ease..."

"Before
I knew it,
the shackles
I'd chained
myself up
with..."



"Mako
had this
strange
power
to her."



"...would
loosen
and
fall off,
one by
one."



YOU CAN'T
POSSIBLY BE
SERIOUS.



DO YOU
NOT REALIZE
HOW CRITICAL
THIS TIME PERIOD
IS IN YOUR LIFE?
FOR YOUR
CAREER?!

A TRIP TO
MAGICAL LAND,
OF ALL
PLACES?



I'M
TELLING YOU
TO FOCUS ON
GETTING INTO
COLLEGE!!

THAT'S
NOT THE
POINT!

I
GET IT!
BUT...



YEAH, I DO.
I MEAN, IT'D BE
ONCE MY EXAMS
ARE OVER,
DURING SPRING
BREAK...



I
NEED
THIS
TRIP!

PLEASE!



PLEASE,
MOM!

I SWEAR
I'LL GET
INTO MY
TOP
CHOICE...



HOW CAN
YOU POSSIBLY
FOCUS ON
STUDYING WHILE
DISTRACTED BY
THIS NON-
SENSE...?

HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN
THAT YOU
FAILED YOUR
HIGH SCHOOL
ENTRANCE
EXAMS?



NO.



SHE CAN
GO TO
HELL!

UGH,
WHATEVER!
I'M GOING
ANYWAY,
WHETHER SHE
LIKES IT
OR NOT!!

WITHOUT
PERMISSION?
YOU SURE?



...

GETTING
DOWN TO
TOKYO ISN'T
CHEAP.

BUT...THEN
THERE'S THE
MONEY.

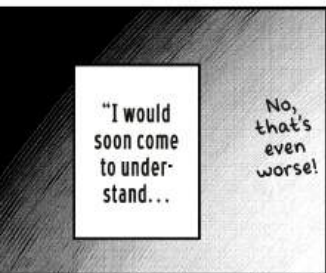
Sigh...



HUH?



I CAN
EARN
WHAT WE
NEED.



Note: 10,000 yen is approximately 70 US dollars.







HOLD ON,
NOW!
YOU WON'T
FIND A
SWEETER
DEAL!!

NO,
THANK YOU.
AND I WON'T
SAY A WORD
ABOUT THIS
TO MAKO.

NO CUT-RATE
PART-TIME JOB
IS EVER GONNA
OFFER YOU
THIS KINDA
DOUGH!!



I
THINK I
SHOULD
LEAVE...

HUH?!

WHADDYA
MEAN?!



WAIT...

HAS
MAKO
BEEN
DOING
THIS?



HECK,
FINE BY ME.
ALWAYS KINDA
WANTED A
CLIP OF A
TRUE-BLUE
RAPE.



TWO!

THREE!



HA
HA
HA!

FALLING
DOWN AND
EVERYTHING!

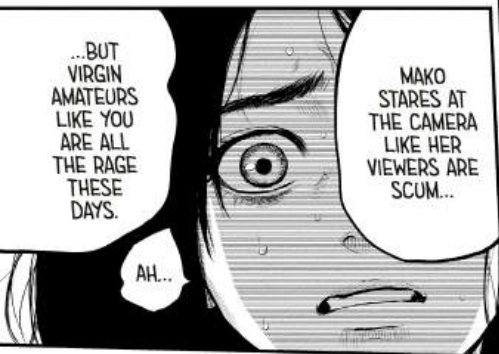
HA HA
HA!

CAMERA'S
ROLLING!!

No...

KL7A

KATA





WHAT
COLOR
ARE HER
NIPP--

URK!

NO!

♪ I
WONDER...

...WHAT KINDA
PANTIES
SWEET LI'L
MIZUKI HAS
GOT ON?



I SAID...
THAT
HURT!!



THAT...
HURT...



YOU
COULDA
BROKE MY
CAMERA!
WHAT
THEN,
HUH?!

I GOT
NEWS
FOR YOU,
LITTLE
GIRL--
YOU AIN'T
SHIT!!



THINK
YOU'RE
HOT
STUFF?!

YOU...

...LITTLE
BITCH!!

DO
YA?!



MOST
RAPE VIDS
ARE BULLSHIT!
JUST ACTORS
PLAYING
PRETEND!

YOU WOULDN'T
BELIEVE THE
IMAGE STABILIZ-
ATION ON
THIS CAMERA,
I TELL YA.

BUT MY
CUSTOMERS'RE
GONNA ENJOY
THE REAL
DEAL...



MAN...
I'M GONNA
HAVE ONE
HECKUVA
LUMP ON MY
NOGGIN...

S'FINE...



I MEAN,
A P.O.V. VID
WITH A
TEEN BITCH?
THIS IS
GONNA BE
LEGENDARY...
♡

SHWD

MAKES IT
EVEN
REALER!













ARE YOU
TELLING ME
IT WASN'T
JUST MAKO
IGARASHI?

YOU
KILLED
SOMEONE
ELSE?



MY MIND
WENT BLANK,
AND MY
BODY WAS
PRACTICALLY
FLOATING.



HANG ON,
NOW.

LIKE EVERY
RESTRAINT
HAD BEEN
REMOVED...



UM...

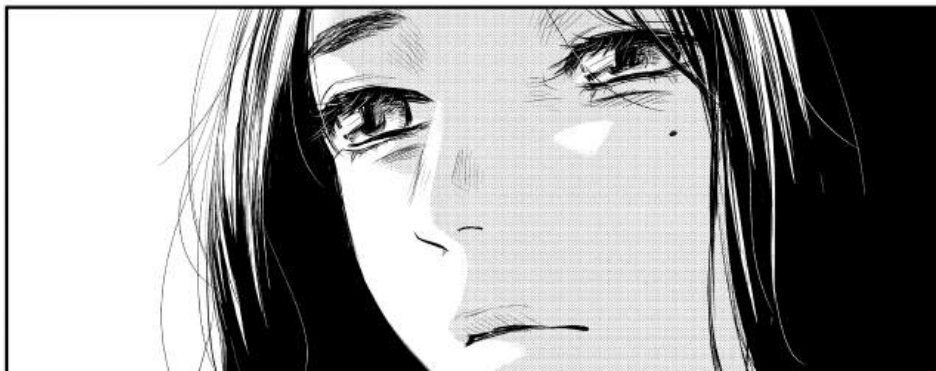
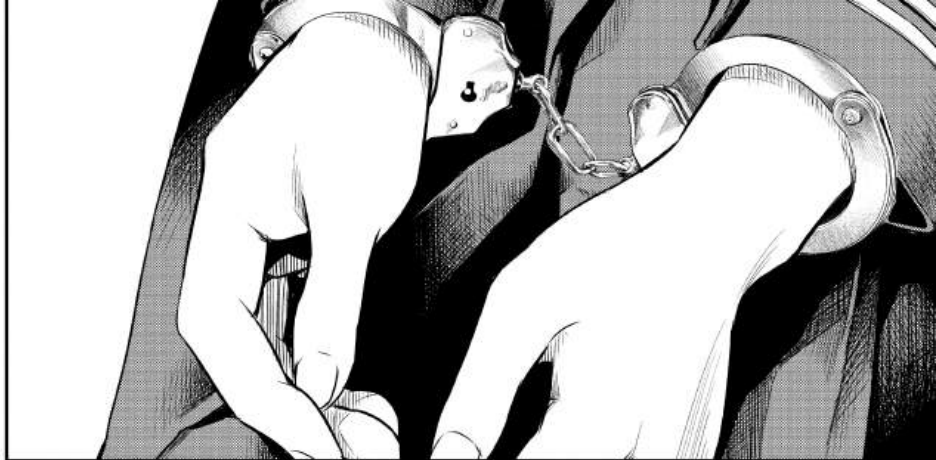
YES.

CHAPTER

2

[Secret]









MIZUKI.



"Mako was somehow calm."



"...and
wiped
the blood
off my
face."

"She
dragged
me away
from the
scene..."



I
KNEW...



I'M SO
SORRY.



...HE'D
DO THAT
TO YOU!!

I KNEW
ABOUT HIM
AND THE
CREEPY
PICTURES
HE TOOK...

...BUT
I NEVER
IMAGINED...





YOU DID
NOTHING
WRONG,
MIZUKI!

IT'S
NOT YOUR
FAULT!



WE'VE
EVEN GOT
PROOF!



I MEAN,
RIGHT?!
ANYONE
WOULD
AGREE!

THIS IS
ALL ON HIM!
HE DESERVED
TO DIE
FOR WHAT
HE DID!



THIS'LL
SELL LIKE
GANGBUSTERS...

PERFECT! ♡
JUST THE
RIGHT LOOK
ON THAT
PRETTY LIL'
FACE...



THAT
PIECE OF
SHIT!



WAIT,
MIZUKU!



C'MON...
LET UNCLE PUT
A BABY IN YA.
LET'S GET
FREAKY.







WE'LL
MAKE IT
ALL GO
AWAY!



NO,
I'M SORRY...
I KNOW YOU
CAN'T GO
THROUGH
THAT.



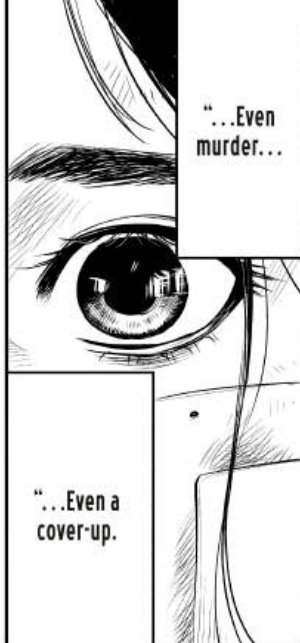
EVEN
MY ROTTEN
UNCLE!



IT'LL BE
LIKE IT NEVER
HAPPENED...

IT'LL BE
OUR SECRET,
MIZUKI!
JUST YOU
AND ME!





"...Even murder..."

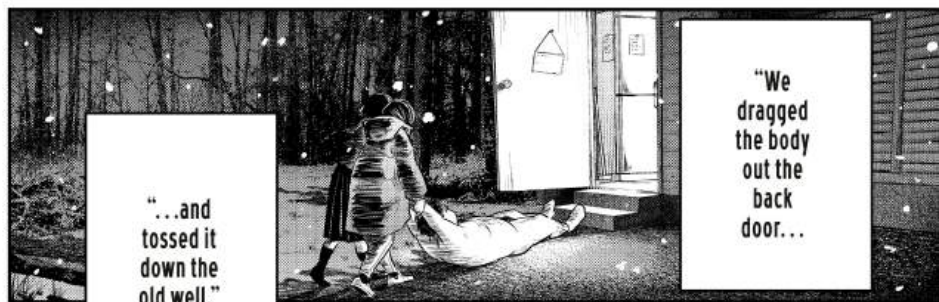
"...Even a cover-up."



OKAY?

"When she stared at me with that look of hers, I felt like I was capable of anything..."

"Mako had this strange power to her."



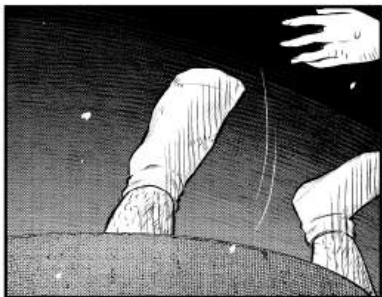
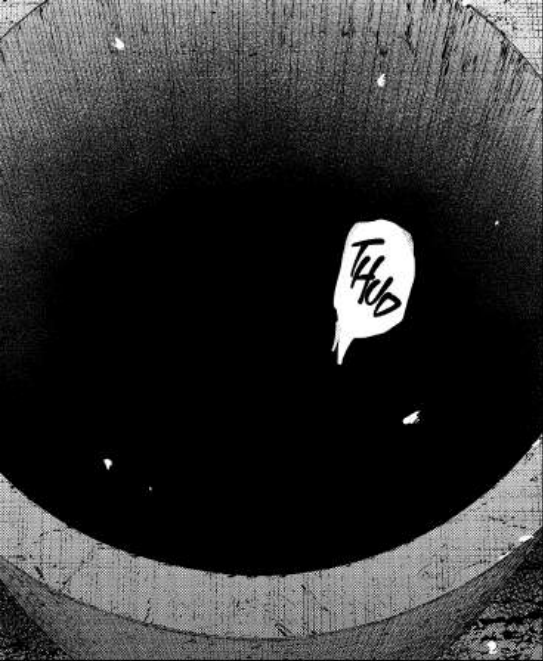
"...and tossed it down the old well."

"We dragged the body out the back door..."



HNGH...
HEAVY!!

I'LL
GET THE
LEGS.



"Then we
cleaned up
every trace
of blood in
the shop..."

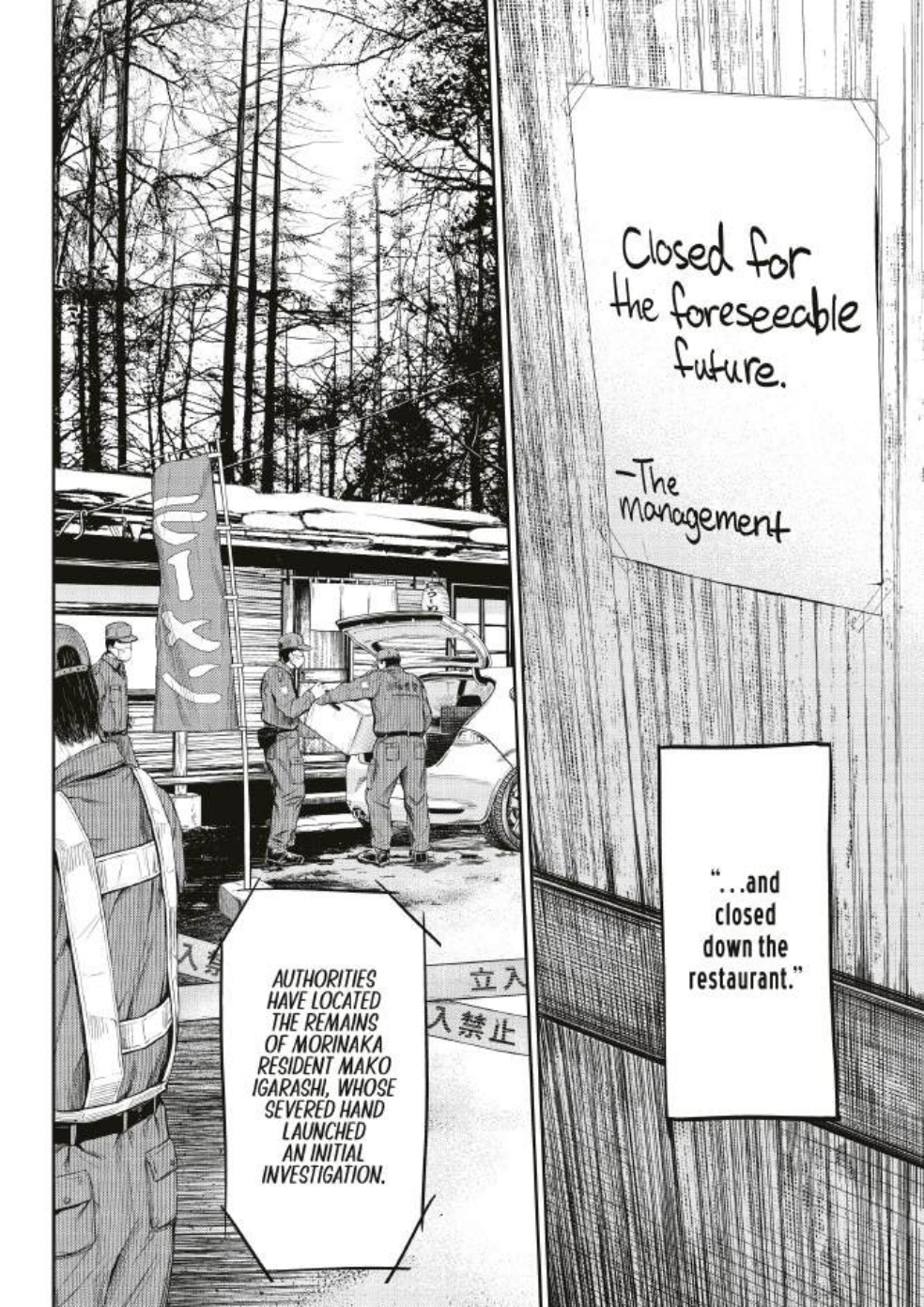
"...threw
away the
bloody
clothing..."



I WIPED
THE FILES
JUST IN
CASE...

...BUT WE
MIGHT AS
WELL...

...TOSS
THIS
TOO.



Closed for
the foreseeable
future.

-The
management

"...and
closed
down the
restaurant."

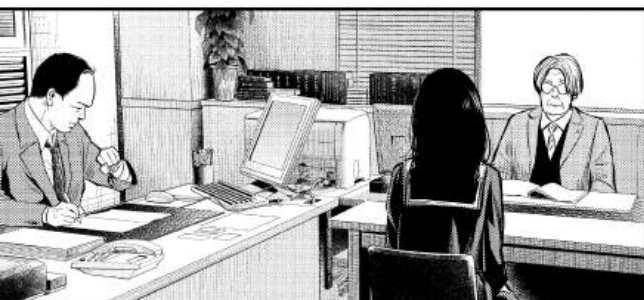
AUTHORITIES
HAVE LOCATED
THE REMAINS
OF MORINAKA
RESIDENT MAKO
IGARASHI, WHOSE
SEVERED HAND
LAUNCHED
AN INITIAL
INVESTIGATION.



THE GIRL'S
TESTIMONY HAS
ALSO BROUGHT
TO LIGHT THE
EXISTENCE OF
A SECOND
VICTIM...

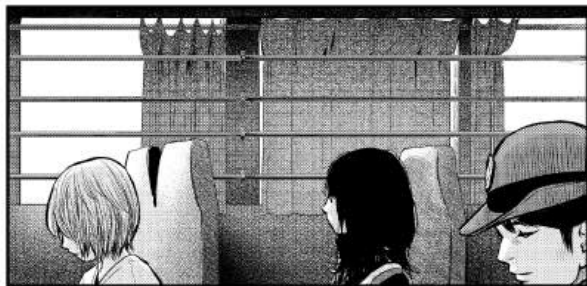


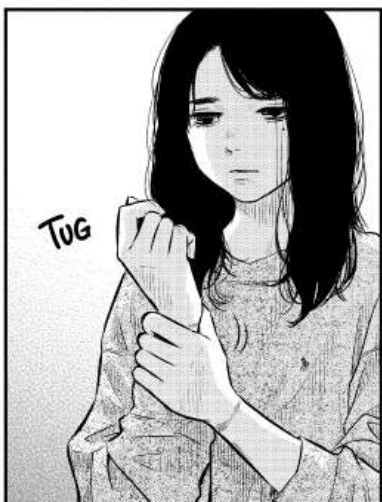
THIS LATEST
FINDING LENDS
CREDIBILITY TO THE
CONFESSION OF
ANOTHER LOCAL
SCHOOL GIRL, WHO
HAS BEEN ARRESTED
BY MORINAKA P.D.
WITHOUT WARRANT.
THE CASE HAS BEEN
REFERRED TO THE
PROSECUTOR'S
OFFICE.



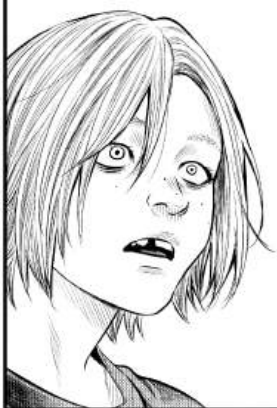
...AND A FULL
INVESTIGATION
IS NOW
UNDERWAY.



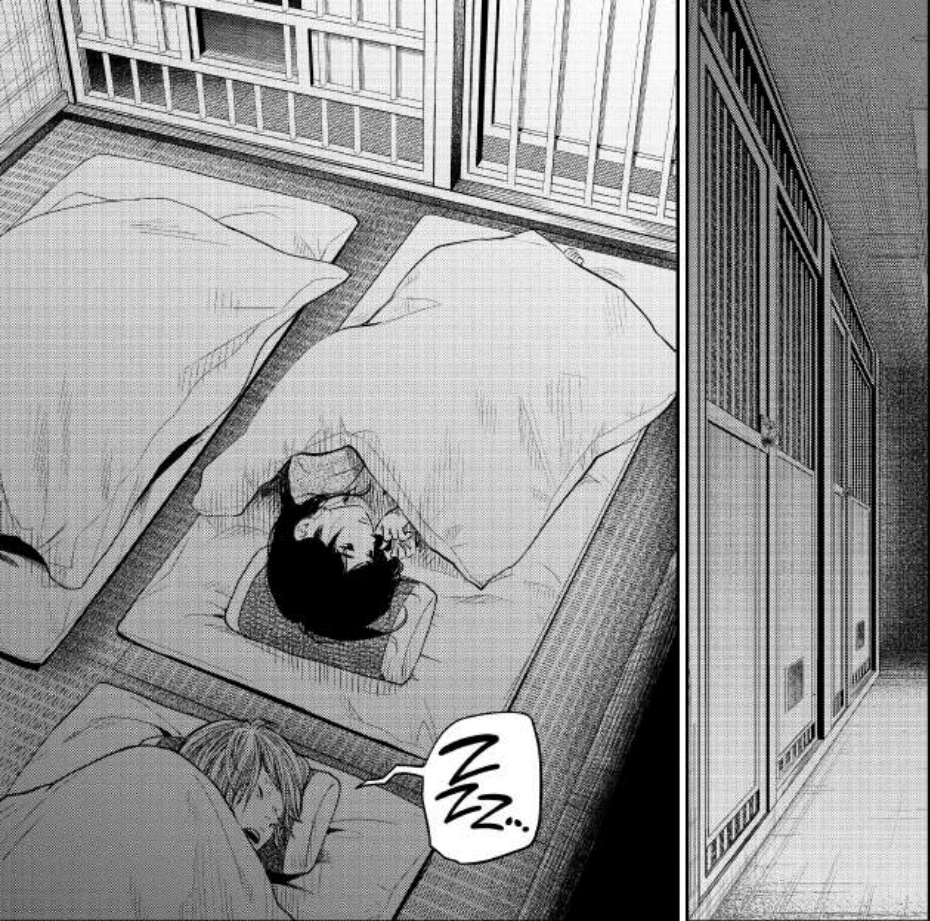














INMATE
NUMBER
FOUR.

YOU
GOT A
VISITOR.



SMILE

MISS MIZUKI
AIKAWA, I
PRESUME?



I'M
YUTAKA
TSUJI,
YOUR COURT-
APPOINTED
ATTORNEY.



HAVE A
SEAT.



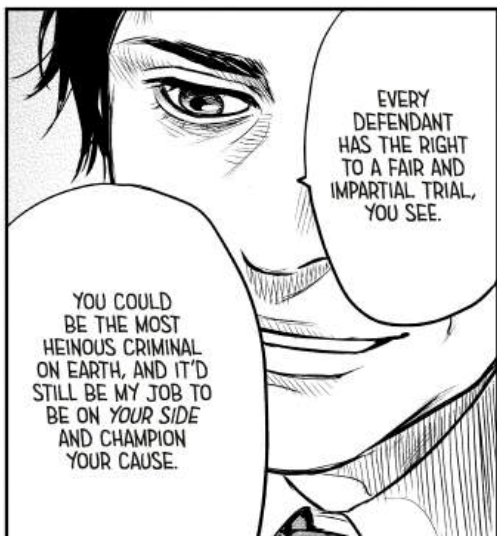
GOOD
TO MEET
YOU.

I'LL BE
THE ONE
DEFENDING
YOU
DURING
YOUR TRIAL.

Card: Tsuji Law Practice / Attorney-at-Law / Yutaka Tsuji



NO
THANKS.





CHAMPION,
HUH...



...WITH YOUR
FIRST OFFENSE--
THE KILLING OF THE
RAMEN SHOP OWNER.
EXTENUATING
CIRCUMSTANCES,
CLEARLY.

MM-
HM.

BASED ON
THE EVIDENCE
AND TESTIMONY
ON RECORD...
I'M SEEING
SOME
LEEWAY...



SO YOU'LL
HAVE PLENTY
OF TIME TO
EXPLAIN YOUR
TAKE ON THESE
EVENTS IN
DETAIL.

AGAIN?
REALLY?



WHAT
I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
IS...



WE'LL
BE IN THIS
FOR THE
LONG HAUL,
YOU AND
ME.

WELL...



...TO THE
DEATH OF
YOUR FRIEND,
MAKO
IGARASHI.

I'M PARTICULARLY
INTERESTED IN THE
TIME PERIOD STARTING
FROM THE DEATH
OF THE UNCLE,
TATSUO ISHIDA..



CARE TO
TELL ME WHAT
HAPPENED?

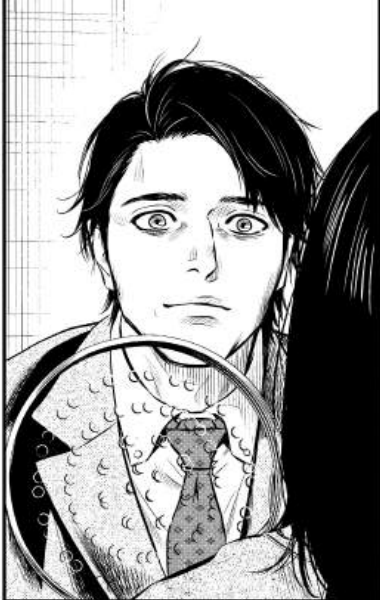
THAT COULD
BE A POINT TO
HAMMER AWAY
AT DURING
THE TRIAL.

MAYBE THE
FIRST KILLING
TRIGGERED
A MENTAL
BREAKDOWN
OF SORTS...



YOU'RE
ON MY SIDE,
YET YOU CAN'T
EVEN LOOK ME
IN THE EYE?

YOU HAVEN'T
LOOKED AT ME
SINCE WE
SAT DOWN.



I'M
FINE WITH
A SHODDY
HACK-JOB
DEFENSE.

I DON'T
MIND, REALLY.
NO LAWYER
WOULD WANT
TO TAKE THIS
CASE...



HACK JOBS
HAPPEN TO
BE MY
SPECIALTY.

YOU
DON'T
SAY?
PHEW!



"...and
the next
three days
passed
pretty
much like
normal."

"I killed
a man and
covered
it up..."



MAKO!



YO!
MAKO!

LISTEN
TO
THIS!!



MORNING.



GOOD
MORNING.





BUT...

HUH?



...GO
OUT FOR
CREPES?

INSTEAD,
HOW
ABOUT
WE...



WAS
SHE ALWAYS
SUCH A
BAD GIRL?



LET'S
DITCH.

WHAT
ABOUT
SCHOOL?!

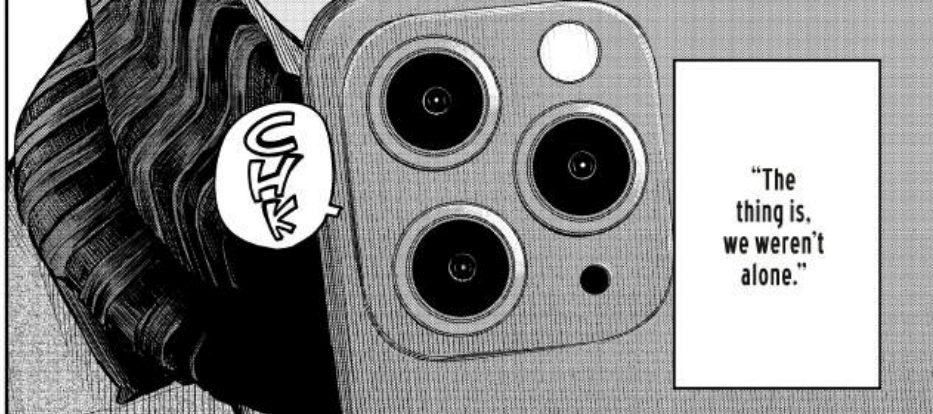


THAT WAS
AIKAWA,
FROM
CLASS B.

EX-CUSE
ME?

THE ONE
WHO'S ALWAYS
STICKING TO
MAKO LIKE
GLUE...





"The
thing is,
we weren't
alone."



"Mako's
stalker was
watching
us."

CHAPTER

3

[Fear]







"Yet,
for some
reason..."

"...I could
never bring
myself to
like him."



"Yuki
Akatsuki--
a college
student
two years
older
than us."

"With
his brains
and looks,
he was never
lacking in
female
attention."



SOMETIMES
HE EVEN
AMBUSHES
ME AT THE
RAMEN SHOP.

...HE HASN'T
STOPPED TRYING
TO CONTACT ME.
WON'T TAKE
NO FOR AN
ANSWER...

YEAH.
WE DATED FOR
A HOT MINUTE
LAST SUMMER.
BUT SINCE WE
BROKE UP...

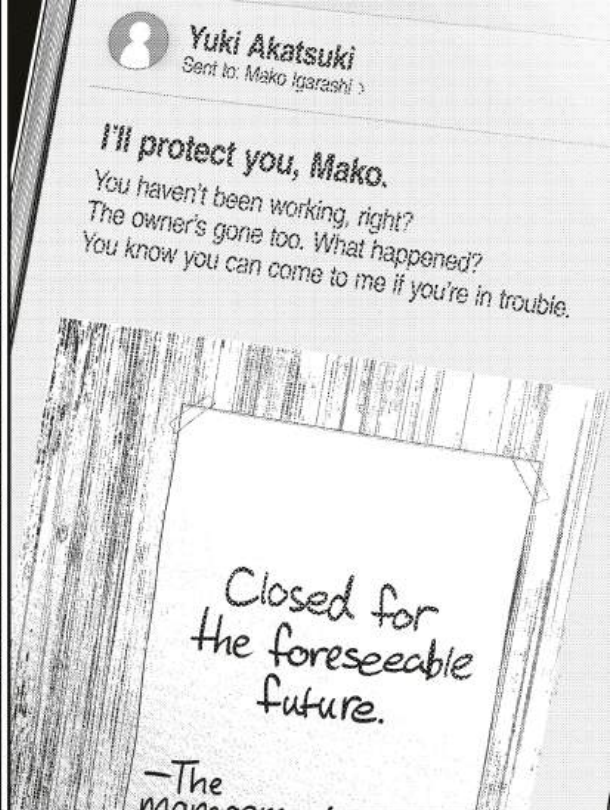


...BUT TWO
DAYS AGO
HE SENT
ME THIS
MESSAGE.



HE
SCARES
ME.

I'VE TRIED
TO LET HIM
DOWN EASY,
SO HE WON'T
FREAK OUT
AND GET
MAD...







Sign: Manga & Internet 24/7





NO.
I'M NOT.

I MEAN...
I DIDN'T DO
ANYTHING
WRONG.



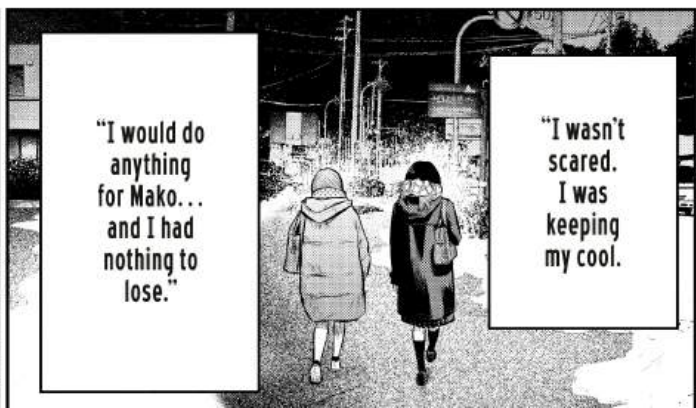


YEAH,
TOTES!



MIZUKI!

"I would do
anything
for Mako...
and I had
nothing to
lose."



"I wasn't
scared.
I was
keeping
my cool."



I'M TOLD
YOU'RE
SKIPPING
CRAM
SCHOOL
TOO?!

WHAT IS
GOING
THROUGH
YOUR HEAD,
YOUNG
LADY?!

YOUR
HOMEROOM
TEACHER
CALLED!!



SHOW ME
YOUR
PHONE,
NOW!

I ASSUME
YOU'RE
CAVORTING
ABOUT
WITH SOME
TRASHY
FRIEND?



NAH.



EVEN IF
I EXPLAINED
MYSELF...

SO
WHAT'S
THE
POINT?

...YOU'D JUST
LOOK DOWN ON ME,
JUDGE ME BY YOUR
OWN STUPID STANDARDS,
AND NOT EVEN TRY
TO UNDERSTAND.



I WON'T
LET YOU
RUIN ME,
LIKE YOU
DID WITH
HIM.

GET IT
THROUGH YOUR
HEAD THAT
YOU CAN'T
RELATE TO
TEENAGERS.



"Mako and I continued cutting class together.



"Neither of us wanted to be alone.

"The library, the park, manga cafés...



"Then...



"...five days after the killing..."

"And sticking together was the only way we could feel at ease.









Sign: Manga / Internet / Private Booths





"Unbeknownst to Mako, I tailed the man who was following her."

"I had to end it."



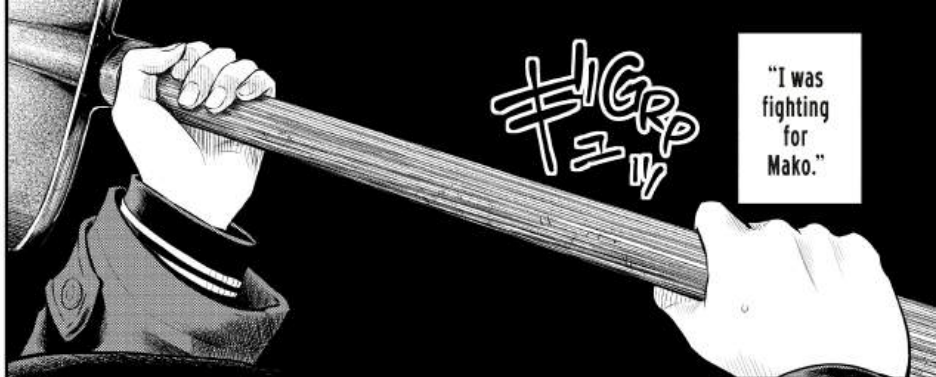
"Mako's stalker was Yuki Akatsuki. No doubt about it."











≠IGRP
ユッ

"I was
fighting
for
Mako."



"Nothing
could
scare
me."

CHAPTER

4

[Yuki Akatsuki]





YUKI
AKATSUKI IS
A THREAT.

SO BEFORE
HE PRIES ANY
DEEPER...

HE HAS
TO DIE.

I HAVE NO
CHOICE...

...HE HAS
TO GO
AWAY!

...BEFORE
HE CAN HURT
MAKO ANY
MORE THAN
HE ALREADY
HAS...



FIRST,
I'LL SNEAK UP
BEHIND HIM,
NICE AND
QUIET.

JUST
DO IT.

DOESN'T
MATTER.



WHAT IF
HE SPOTS
ME?



CAN'T
LET HIM
RUN!



WHAT IF
HE RUNS?















I JUST HAD A
FEELING THAT
MAYBE MAKO'S
MIXED UP IN
SOME BAD
BUSINESS...



...OF BAD
BUSINESS?

WHAT
SORT...



MAKO INSISTS
SHE'S FINE,
BUT SHE'S
BEEN ACTING
SO STRANGE
SO STRANGE
LATELY.



THEY SAY
HE BRINGS
GIRLS
HERE...

...AND DOES
FILTHY
THINGS TO
THEM...



HER
UNCLE?
BIG GUY,
YEAH?

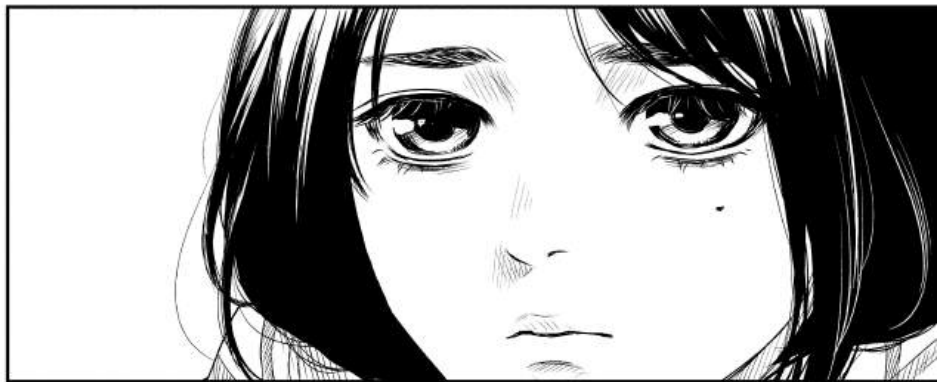
YOU
KNOW
THE
OWNER
HERE?

WELL,
THERE'S TALK
ON THE STREETS
ABOUT HIM, AND
IT'S NOTHING
GOOD...



AND I
HAVEN'T
SEEN
HER UNCLE
AROUND
AT ALL...







SO MUCH SO
THAT I WAS
A LITTLE
JEALOUS...



WASN'T THAT
HIM, SNEAKING
AROUND TO
TAKE PICTURES
OF YOU AT THE
INTERNET
CAFÉ?

BUT
YUKI AKATSUKI
WAS, IN FACT,
STALKING
THE TWO
OF YOU.



I DIDN'T
HAVE A MAN
OF MY OWN
LOOKING OUT
FOR ME.



IT WASN'T
NECESSARILY
HIM.

I CAN'T
BE SURE,
HONESTLY.



...HOW
DOES THE
CHARMING LAD
FIT INTO THE
MURDER
OF MAKO
IGARASHI?

SO TELL
ME...



"...so I asked Mako if maybe we should bring him into the loop and ask for his help.

"Yuki was getting closer to our secret..."

BUT MAKO...
HE WOULD
HEAR US OUT.
HE'D BE ON
OUR SIDE...

NO!!

BELIEVE
ME, MIZUKI!!
YOU CAN'T
TRUST HIM!

...ARE YOU
SUGGESTING
THIS NOW,
MIZUKI?

NO! NO
FREAKIN'
WAY!

WHY...

"But
then..."

"Mako
was panicking.
She'd been
backed straight
into a corner.



"...drag
her any
deeper
into this."



"I knew
I couldn't..."



MIZUKI!!
HEY!



YOU
WANTED TO
CHAT?



I
KILLED
HIM...

...AND
DUMPED HIM
DOWN THE
WELL.



MAKO'S UNCLE,
THE RAMEN
SHOP OWNER...
HE'S GONE.



IT'S
MY FAULT
SHE GOT
INVOLVED
AT ALL.

IT
WASN'T
MAKO...
SHE DIDN'T
DO A
THING.



"I gave
Yuki a full
confession.
Every last
detail."

"And
I begged
him not to
contact Mako
anymore."



THERE'S
NO OTHER
WAY TO KEEP
MAKO
SAFE.

WAIT,
NO!

I'M
GOING TO
TURN
MYSELF
IN.





"I borrowed
the key to the
shop from
Mako..."

"...and Yuki
helped me
check out
her uncle's
computer."



...THAT HER
UNCLE MIGHT'VE
RECORDED HER WITH
HIDDEN CAMERAS.
SHE WAS WONDERING
IF SHE COULD
SOMEHOW FIND
AND DELETE
THOSE FILES.

MAKO ONCE
TOLD ME...



I DELETED
THE STUFF HE HAD
OF MAKO, BUT SHE
WAS FAR FROM THE
ONLY GIRL THAT
BASTARD WAS
PREYING ON...

YEESH...
LOOKS LIKE ALL
THOSE DISGUSTING
RUMORS WERE
SPOT ON...





CHAPTER

5

[Mizuki Aikawa]



Boxes: Yamagata Police







...BECAUSE
SHE WAS
SUSPICIOUS...

...ABOUT
WHY I'D
NEEDED THE
KEY TO THE
SHOP...



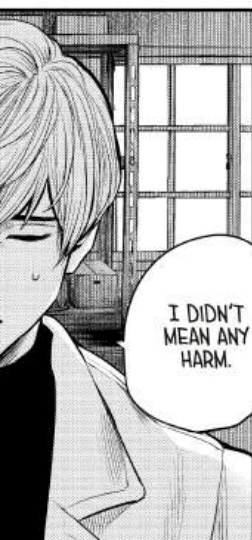
I GUESS MAKO
FOLLOWED ME
THERE...

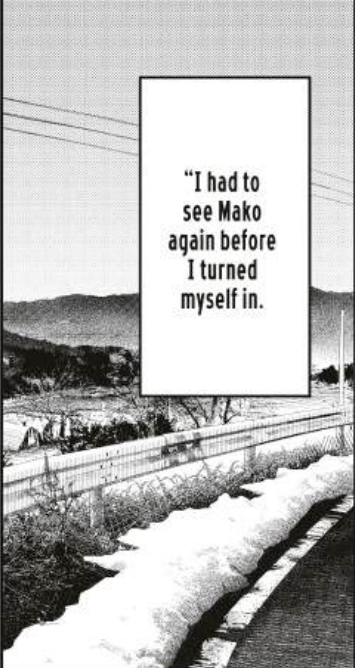


"It wasn't
what it
looked like,
but Mako
was already
on edge and
distrustful."

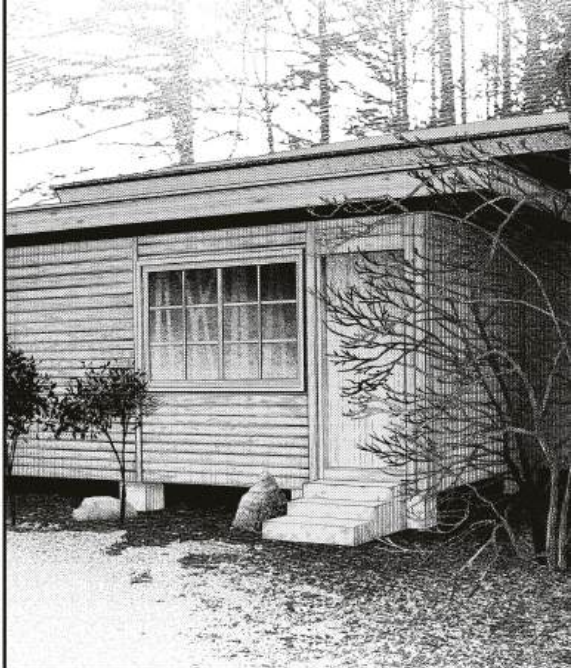
"And I had
accidentally
rubbed salt
in the
wound."







"I had to
see Mako
again before
I turned
myself in.



"...for
every-
thing...

"...say
sorry...

"I knew she'd be
dead set against
my plan, so I wasn't
going to tell her.
I'd just...



17:10 4G
Calling...
Mako Igarashi

"But she
wouldn't
answer her
phone.







MAKO!



ARE
YOU...

CHILLY?

HOW ABOUT
I BUY US
SOME HOT
DRINKS.









"She wasn't prepared to hear anything I had to say."

NUH-UH!
GET
AWAY!!!

CAREFUL
WITH
THAT!
HEY!

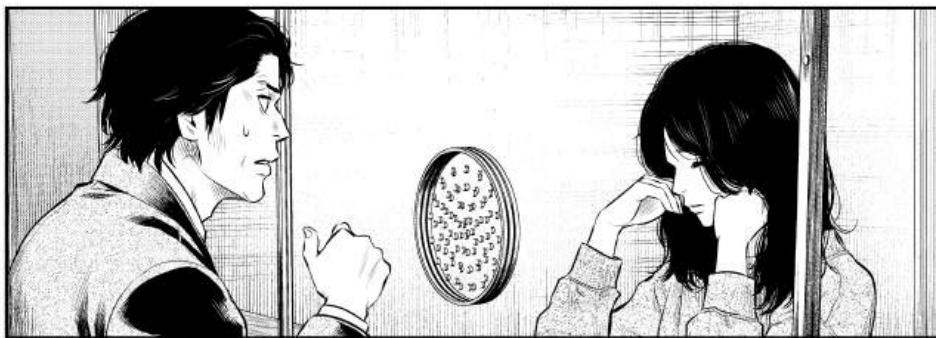
"Mako
was in a
total
panic."



"Before
I knew
it..."



"...she was
lying there,
dead."





THE BODY
WOULD'VE BEEN
A LOT EASIER TO
HIDE IF I'D REALLY
CHOPPED IT UP
INTO LITTLE
PIECES...

BUTCHERED...
IS A STRONG
WORD.

I ONLY
CUT OFF
HER HEAD
AND ONE
HAND.



...



SO
INSTEAD OF THAT,
I DECIDED TO
SEND HER HOME,
SO TO SPEAK...

BUT CUTTING
SOMEONE UP
IS A PAIN IN
THE BUTT.



MAYBE
SHE REALLY
IS SUFFERING
FROM A MENTAL
BREAKDOWN?

OR...

"BEFORE
I KNEW IT,
SHE WAS
LYING THERE,
DEAD"?

WHAT IN THE
WORLD?
SHE'S SPARED
NO DETAIL SO
FAR. BUT NOW
SHE'S BEING
DELIBERATELY
VAGUE?



I'M
THE ONE WHO
KILLED MAKO!
IT WAS ME!
THERE YOU
HAVE IT!



THANKS FOR
HEARING
ME OUT.



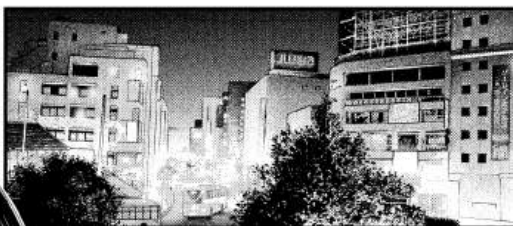
FINE,
THEN.

THAT'S
ALL FOR
TODAY...





Sign: Tsuji Law Practice





HUH?
DIDN'T YOU
INTERVIEW
THIS GIRL,
FACE-TO-
FACE?

WON'T
SHE BE
ELIGIBLE
FOR THE
DEATH
PENALTY?

PROBABLY
NOT.

HMM.
I DUNNO.



NAH. YOU'RE
SCUZZY. IT'S
WRITTEN ALL
OVER YOUR
FACE.

AHEM.
RUDE. I'M
A PERFECT
GENTLEMAN.



ACTUALLY,
I'M THINKING
YOU COULD
HELP ME OUT
ON THIS CASE,
HAYAMI.

HMM?



...I GET
THE FEELING
SHE'S NOT
TOO FOND
OF ME.

I
SURE
DID,
BUT...

WELL, YEAH.
YOU COME OFF
AS THE TYPE
WHO CREEPS ON
TEEN GIRLS,
TSUJI.

BUT I'M
NECK-DEEP IN
THREE WHOLE PAIN-IN-
THE-ASS CASES!!
DO I LOOK LIKE I
GOT TIME TO
KILL?!

SAY
WHAT?!

THIS
DEMANDS
A LADY'S
TOUCH.

PLEASE?

SMILE

FIND
YOURSELF
ANOTHER
LADY,
BUB!!

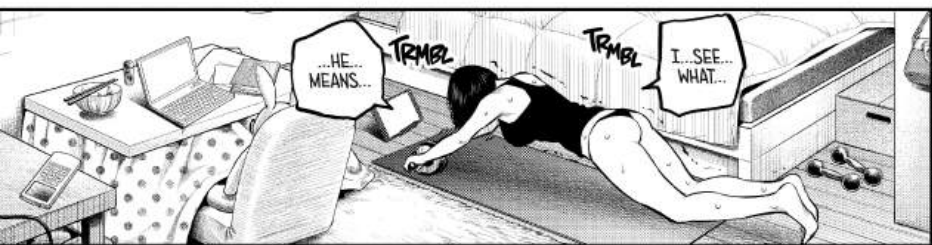
WHO,
ME?!



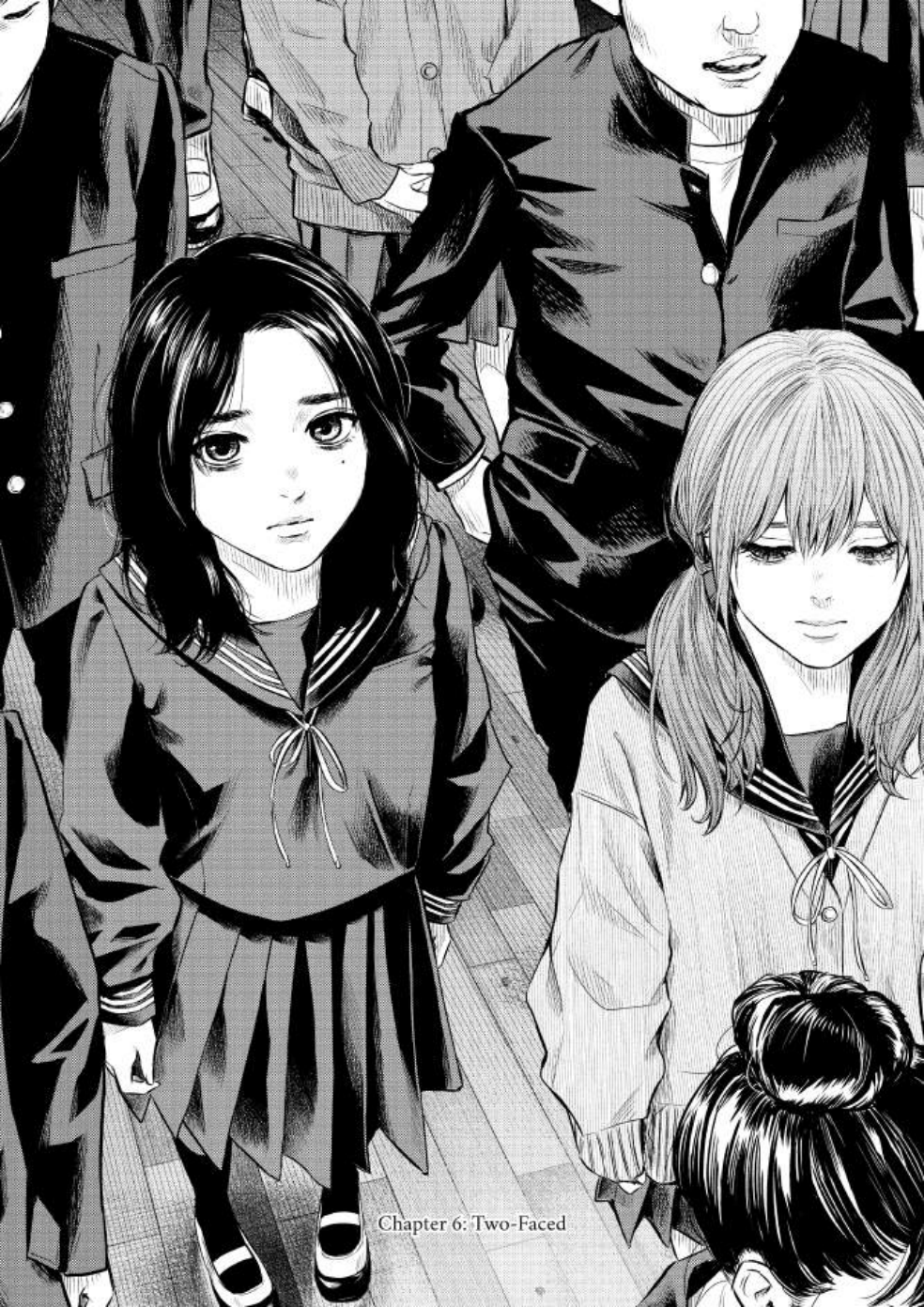
CHAPTER

6

[Two-Faced]









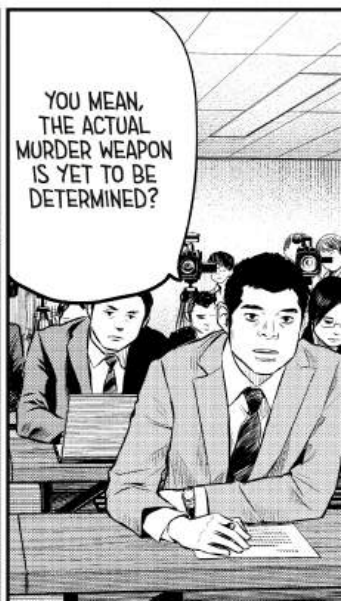
HOWEVER,
NO TRACE OF
MAKO IGARASHI'S
BLOOD WAS
FOUND ON
THE KNIFE.

AHEM...
WE'VE CONFIRMED
THAT THE CHEF'S
KNIFE SURRENDERED
BY THE OFFENDER
WAS IN FACT THE
SAME WEAPON USED
IN THE SLAYING OF
RAMEN SHOP OWNER
TATSUO ISHIDA.



...AND THE
SUSPECT WAS
IN A STATE
OF GREAT
DISTRESS.

THE
INVESTIGATION
IS ONGOING...

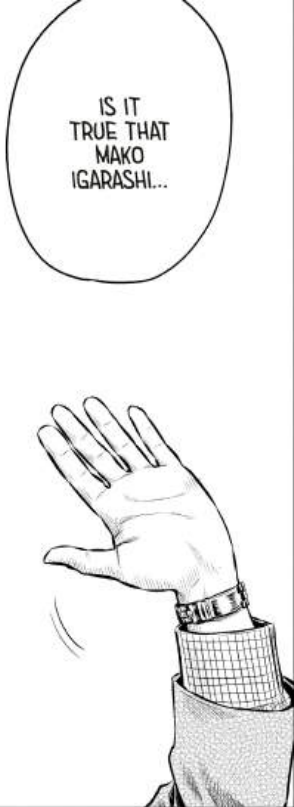


YOU MEAN,
THE ACTUAL
MURDER WEAPON
IS YET TO BE
DETERMINED?



DID HER
DEATH HAVE
ANYTHING
TO DO
WITH THAT
INDIVIDUAL?

...WAS THE
VICTIM OF A
STALKER?



IS IT
TRUE THAT
MAKO
IGARASHI...



I'M NOT
SURE WHERE
YOU LEARNED
SUCH
INFORMATION...

AH...







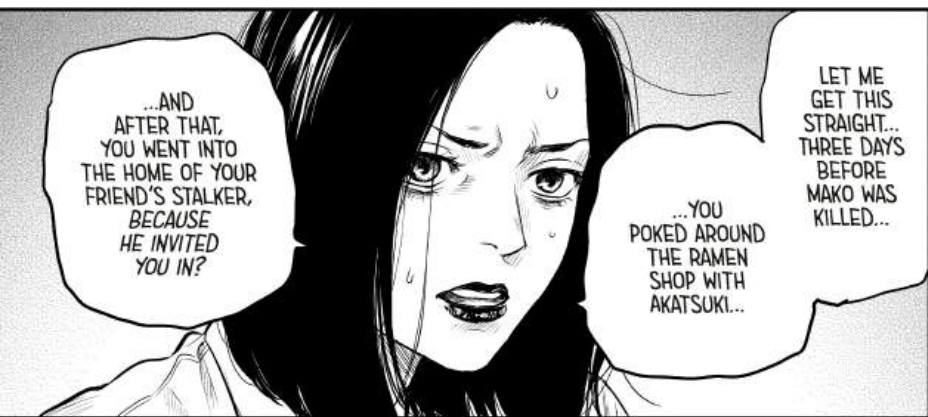
Newspaper: Result of an Argument / Girl Confessed Motive

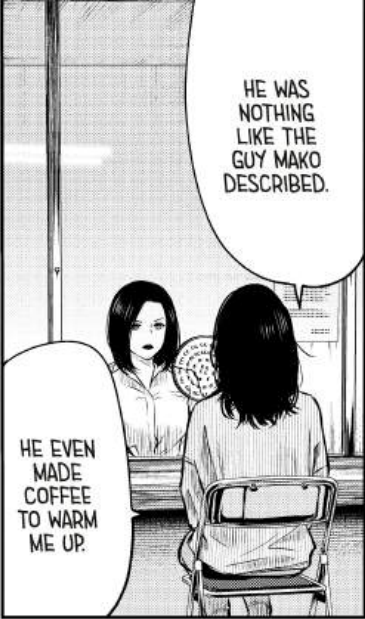












HE WAS
NOTHING
LIKE THE
GUY MAKO
DESCRIBED.

HE EVEN
MADE
COFFEE
TO WARM
ME UP.



YUKI SEEMED...
GENUINELY SORRY
ABOUT TOUCHING ME...
ABOUT MAKING ME
UNCOMFORTABLE.



...SO
I GUESS
YUKI TOOK
PITY ON
ME.

SELF-DEFENSE
IN THE HEAT
OF THE MOMENT
OR NOT, I HAD
KILLED A MAN...



WAS HE
THE ONE WHO
SUGGESTED
TURNING
YOURSELF IN?





THAT'S
HOW HE
PUT IT.



I GET THE
PICTURE.

HMM.

IT'S
CLEAR THAT
YUKI AKATSUKI
WAS STILL
OBSESSING
OVER MAKO.



NO.
NOT MUCH
DETAIL...

YOU WERE
CLOSE, RIGHT?
DID HE SHOW UP
EVERYWHERE
SHE WENT, FOR
INSTANCE?

DID
MAKO GO
INTO DETAIL
ABOUT
HOW HE'D
BEEN...

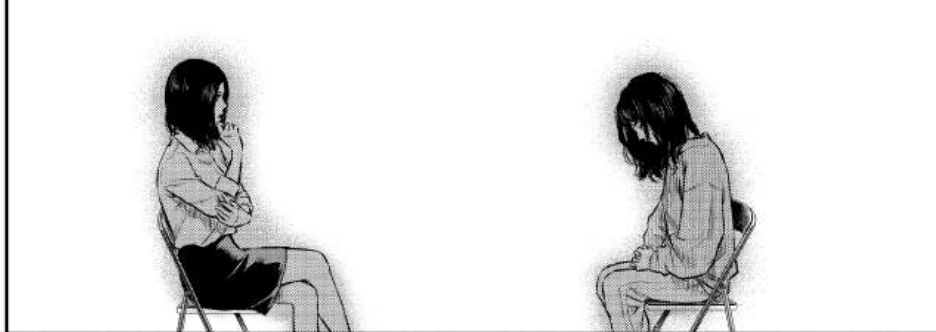
...HARASSING
HER?

OR PRINT OUT
DISPARAGING FLIERS
ABOUT HER AND
DISTRIBUTE THEM
AROUND TOWN?



NO,
NONE OF
THAT!

MAYBE HE
SENT HER
OBSCENE
PHOTOS AND
IMAGES?



THOUGHT
SO.

I
SEE...



SHE DIDN'T
MENTION
ANYTHING
LIKE THAT.



MIZUKI
AIKAWA
FELL **HARD**
FOR YUKI
AKATSUKI.



*The kanji characters in Hayami's name are "soon" and "view."





COMING TO
HASTY CONCLUSIONS
IS A GOOD WAY TO
LOSE SIGHT OF WHAT'S
REALLY GOING ON.
THE FACT IS, IN MANY
CASES INVOLVING
JUVENILES, THE
SUSPECT IS ACTUALLY
COVERING FOR
SOMEONE ELSE.



SINCE SHE'S
RELUCTANT TO
COME CLEAN,
WE NEED TO
FAMILIARIZE
OURSELVES WITH
THE BACKGROUND
AND EVENTS
SURROUNDING
THE CASE.



IT'S
AROUND
HERE.



WOW,
I CAN
SOMEHOW
HEAR YOUR
EVERY
THOUGHT.
NEAT
TRICK.

JEEZ, I WAS JUST
OFFERING A FRICKIN' THEORY!!
LEAVE IT TO A FORMER
PROSECUTOR TO BE A HUGE
PAIN...AND HEY, DON'T FORGET-
I'VE GOT MORE YEARS AS
A DEFENSE ATTORNEY
THAN YOU! UGH. YOU'RE
DOING NOTHING TO DISPROVE
MY OTHER BIG THEORY,
WHICH IS THAT OLDER
MEN SUCK.

G
A
H!

HIS FATHER'S
GOT MONEY,
APPARENTLY.

NICE
JOINT,
FOR A
COLLEGE
BOY.



MUSTN'T BE
PREJUDICED,
NOW.

SOME
SPOILED
PUNK, THEN?
BET HE'S
PRETTY, TOO.
I'M SICK
OF HIM
ALREADY...

203

THIS IS
THE ONE.



LET'S
CHECK THE
COLLEGE.

NOT
HOME, I
GUESS.

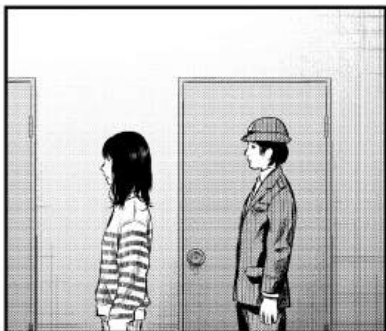




CHAPTER

7

[Murderer]









YOU'RE
DEFENDING
MIZUKI
AIKAWA?

A LAWYER,
HUH? AH...



IT'S
COLD
OUT
HERE.

COME
ON IN.



THOUGH...
I DON'T HAVE
ANY TEA OR
SNACKS TO
OFFER YOU.



DID SHE
KILL MAKO?
WAS THAT
IT?

!

YOU'VE
GOT ONE
UPHILL
BATTLE,
THERE.

ANYWAY,
I THOUGHT
SOMEONE
MIGHT
DROP BY.







FANCY LOFT
YOU'VE GOT
HERE, MR.
AKATSUKI.



SHE'S GOT
HER PHONE
ON HER...
SHE'LL
SURVIVE.

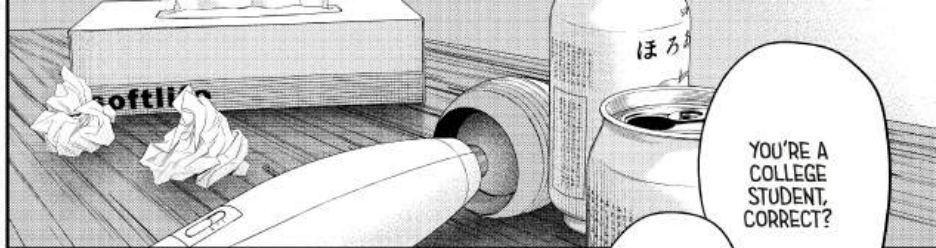
MEANWHILE,
OUR TARGET IS
RIGHT HERE.



YOU MUST BE A
POPULAR GUY.

HA
HA!

ARE WE
ABANDONING
HER OUT
THERE
IN THE
COLD?!







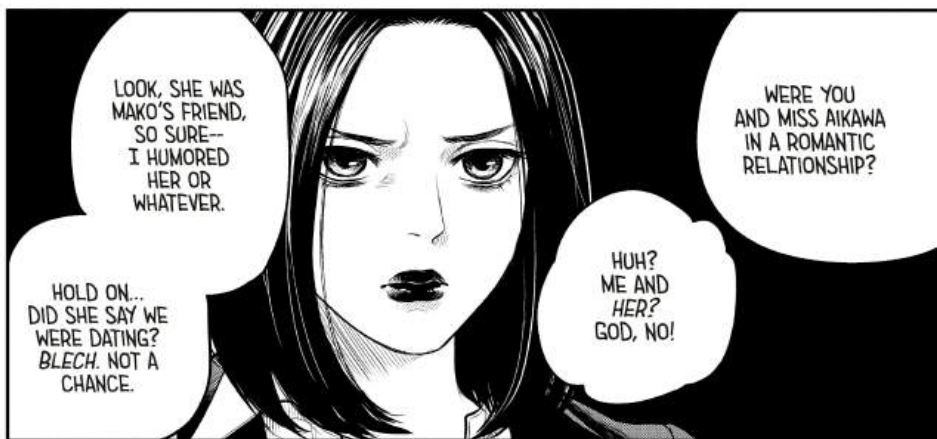
HA HA...
ANYWAY,
WHAT WERE
YOU SAYING?
SHE TURNED
HERSELF
IN?

NO, I DON'T
RECALL
TELLING HER
TO DO
ANYTHING
LIKE THAT.



HA HA!
SORRY,
I HAD TO
DO IT!

MAN,
DO I MAKE
A GREAT
VILLAIN,
OR WHAT?



LOOK, SHE WAS
MAKO'S FRIEND,
SO SURE--
I HUMORED
HER OR
WHATEVER.

WERE YOU
AND MISS AIKAWA
IN A ROMANTIC
RELATIONSHIP?

HUH?
ME AND
HER?
GOD, NO!

HOLD ON...
DID SHE SAY WE
WERE DATING?
BLECH. NOT A
CHANCE.



THE WAY SHE
THREW HERSELF
AT ME...
YEAH, SHE
FREAKED ME
OUT.

I
SHOULD'VE
KNOWN SHE
WAS TROUBLE.
TURNED OUT TO
BE A KILLER,
HUH?



WHEN
WAS THAT,
EXACTLY?
WAS IT WHEN
YOU INVITED HER
INTO YOUR
HOME?



WHY'D SHE
HAVE TO KILL
MAKO?

THAT
BITCH, I
SWEAR...



WATCH
YOUR
TONE,
PAL!

AND DON'T
LET ANYONE
TELL YOU
DIFFERENT!

MAKO
AND I
WERE IN A
SERIOUS,
LOVING
RELATION-
SHIP.



WE'RE
UNDER THE
IMPRESSION
THAT YOU HAD
BEEN STALKING
MISS IGARASHI
FOR QUITE
SOME TIME.

WAS THERE
SOME KIND
OF DISCORD
BETWEEN
TWO
OF YOU?

WHOA,
THERE!



SO YOU'RE
NOT AWARE
OF THE
SUFFERING
YOU CAUSED
MISS
IGARASHI?



I WAS SHOWING
LOVE IN MY OWN WAY!
WHAT, HAVING ONE
LITTLE FIGHT MAKES
A GUY A STALKER?
I GUESS THE WHOLE
WORLD'S FULL OF
STALKERS, THEN!



WHAT WOULD
YOU KNOW
ABOUT IT,
HUH?



IS THIS
OLD FART NOT
TREATING
YOU RIGHT?
I BET I
COULD.

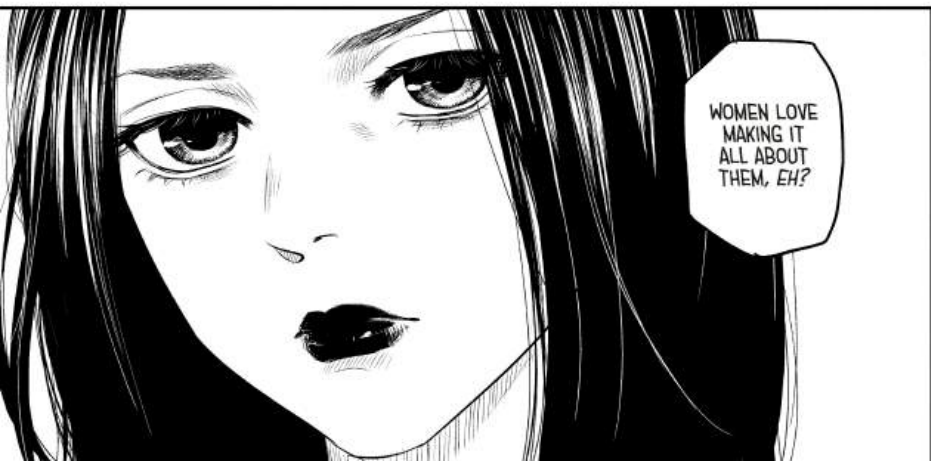
LOOKS LIKE
THE STRESS
OF THE JOB'S
SHOWING ON
YOUR FACE,
MA'AM.



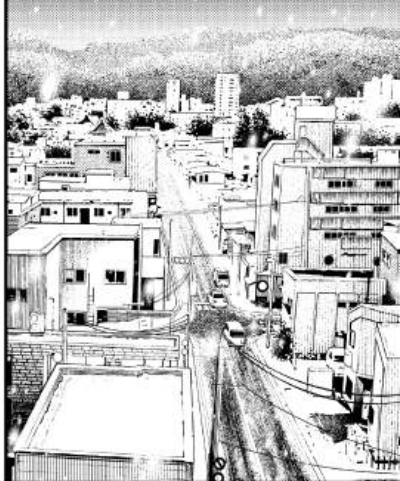
YOU
THINK I MADE
HER SUFFER?
WHAT ABOUT MY
SUFFERING,
HUH?

SO WHAT
WENT DOWN
BETWEEN MAKO
AND ME IS
NONE OF
YOUR DAMN
BUSINESS!

LISTEN,
THE COPS
HAVEN'T SAID
A WORD TO
ME ABOUT
ANYTHING.



WOMEN LOVE
MAKING IT
ALL ABOUT
THEM, EH?



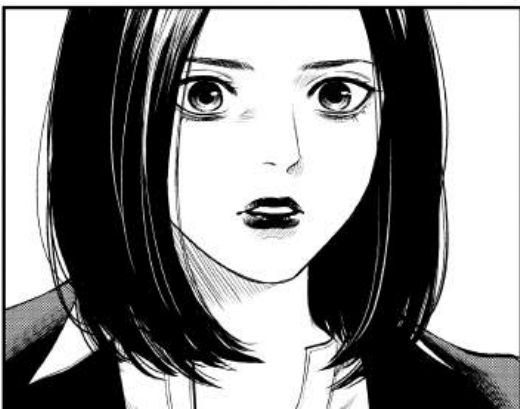
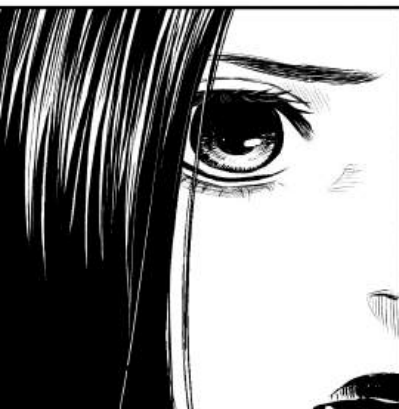
IT CAN
BE TOUGH,
WITH
FAMILY...

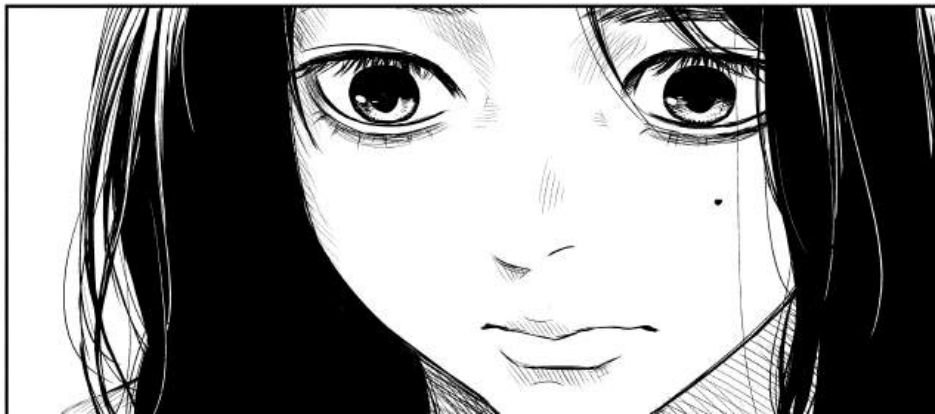
...BUT I
MANAGED TO
TELL HER.

SEEING
HER FACE
MADE ME
NAUSEOUS...

"OUR
FAMILY IS
DOOMED."

"YOUR
DAUGHTER'S A
MURDERER."







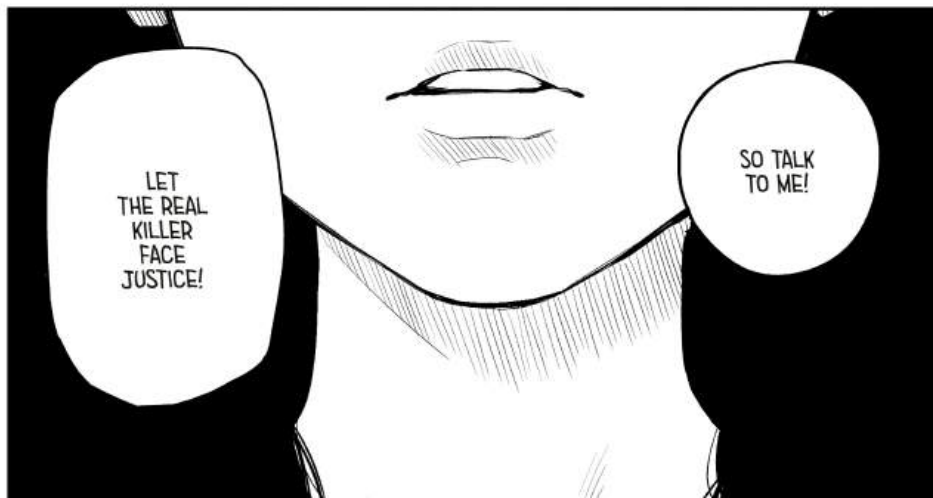


...YOU MIGHT
STILL HAVE
A FIGHTING
CHANCE TO
GET OUT
OF HERE!



I CAN'T GIVE YOU
ANY GUARANTEES,
AND I'M ONLY
SPECULATING...

...BUT IF YOU
COME CLEAN
ABOUT
EVERYTHING
AT THIS
POINT...



LET
THE REAL
KILLER
FACE
JUSTICE!

SO TALK
TO ME!



BUT
SHE WAS
CLEARLY
RATTLED.

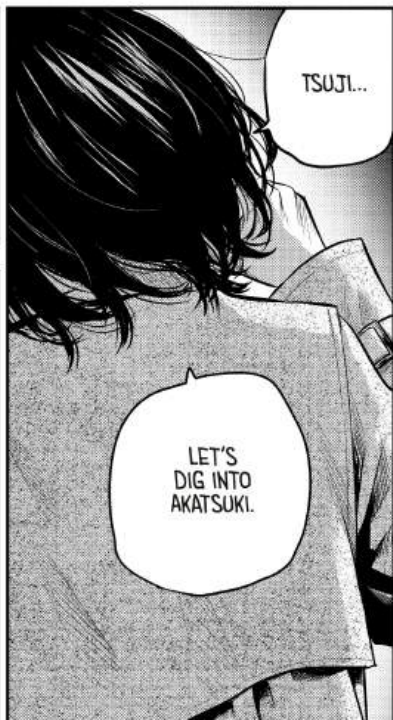
AIKAWA ISN'T
CHANGING
HER TUNE.

MM-HM.



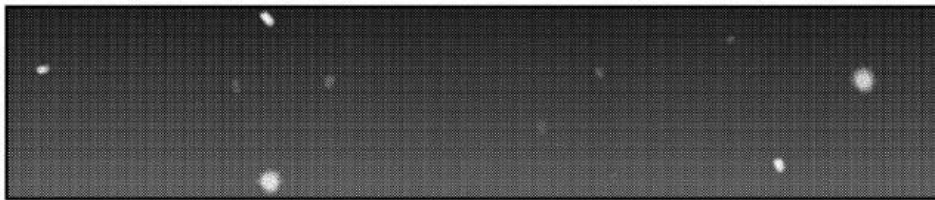
WE HAVE
OPTIONS,
THERE.

YEAH...



TSUJI...

LET'S
DIG INTO
AKATSUKI.







IT'S
JUST...

Ah
ha ha!

Ha
ha
ha!

WHAT'S
YOUR
DAMAGE?
JEEZ!

Ha ha
ha ha!

...

HAH...
AH HA
HA!

SORRY...IT'S
PERSONAL.



I COULD
AND
WOULD DO
ANYTHING...

NOBODY
COULD
POSSIBLY
GET IT.

IT'S **OUR**
SECRET,
AFTER ALL.

...FOR
YOU,
MAKO.





*Could anything make you kill another human being?
While portraying a murderer in this series, I got
to wondering if anything could drive me to it.
You'll find my answer within this tale.*

—NON

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adabana

徒 花

A small town is shocked by the gruesome murder of a student. Mizuki Aikawa, the victim's best friend, confesses to the brutal crime. However, Mizuki's public defenders are convinced there's more to the story—who is she protecting and why? As the mystery unravels, a tale of exploitation, trauma, and survival is revealed in this suspenseful crime drama.

